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REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE SIXTH CONFERENCE

Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names/
Comité Permanent Canadien des noms Géographiques

Paper submitted by Canada**

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In 1997 we are celebrating the Centennial year of the establishment of a national geographical names authority for Canada. The very first board (the Geographic Board of Canada) was set up to standardize the spelling and applications of geographical names, to maintain a register of this information, and to advise federal departments on the use of these names. From this early federal board has developed the federal / provincial / territorial names committee of today - the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN).

Over the past century, changes have taken place in the way geographical names are managed, but the CPCGN of today continues to be responsible for developing policies, principles and procedures relevant to the cartographic and linguistic treatment of geographical names and associated terminology. The CPCGN is the umbrella organization coordinating all matters affecting geographical nomenclature in Canada, with decisions on new names and name changes being made through the jurisdictions of CPCGN members.

Membership on the Committee is set down in the Order in Council (the latest version being P.C. 1990-549 of 22 March 1990). In 1997, there are 25 members, representing ten provinces; two territories; various federal departments involved with mapping, defence, archives, translation, Canada Lands, and statistics; and academics chairing CPCGN advisory committees. During the coming year, it is planned to invite Canada Post Corporation to become a member of the CPCGN. By April 1999, the new territory of Nunavut will come into being, and will have representation on the Committee.

1. CPCGN meetings and advisory committees

Since 1992, the CPCGN has met annually - in Newfoundland, Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec, and Yukon Territory.

The 1997 meeting was held in Ottawa, the national capital, in association with special events to celebrate the Centennial. To publicize the work of the Committee to the general public we organized two events. The federal government departments of Parks Canada and the National Archives of Canada led the production of an exhibit, *Every Name Tells a Story: 100 Years of Official Naming in Canada. / À chaque nom son histoire : 100 ans d'appellations officielles de noms de lieux au Canada*, to be open for several months, without admission charge, to the public. The second event was an illustrated bilingual lecture *Geographical Names of Canada: Historical Treasure Chest / La toponymie canadienne, un coffre au trésor historique*, presented by Henri Dorion and co-sponsored by The Royal Canadian Geographical Society and the CPCGN.

Four advisory committees of the CPCGN have been active during the past five years, providing advice on toponymy research, nomenclature and delineation, names of undersea and maritime features, and digital toponymic services. In addition, a working group developed specifications for a concise gazetteer of Canada (published in 1997), and another orchestrated activities for the Centennial year.

Since 1992, the CPCGN has been chaired by Mr. E.A. Price, from the private sector.

2. Strategic plan, mission and goals

Increased pressure on government resources has led to more emphasis on business-like approaches to government work. To address these needs, the CPCGN developed its first strategic plan in 1989. Since then, this document, which provides a framework for the work of the CPCGN, has been through two revisions (1993 and 1997). It provides a handbook for CPCGN members, and in its appendices includes the current Order in Council, the mandates of the advisory committees, and contact points for members.

In the 1993 and 1997 editions, the core activity areas of the CPCGN are shown as:

- collection of geographical names
- automation of geographical names records and assurance of availability of information in automated systems
- development of national toponymic policies, principles, standards and guidelines
- provision of appropriate methodology, tools and training to support CPCGN toponymic programmes
- dissemination of accurate toponymic information
- outreach and liaison with the international community

3. National programmes

In keeping with these goals, various activities have been undertaken since 1992.

3.1 Field recording of geographical names

Field work is now an activity organized at the provincial or territorial, rather than federal, level. Gathering of local geographical names is sometimes community based, and may be done by government or through the private sector. Field work, as undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s in Canada, is now an even more expensive proposition, and most governments are cutting back on extensive field programmes. Particular in southern Canada, data gathering is limited to small areas, or to investigation of public proposals for new names or name changes. In areas of northern Canada, fairly extensive field collection is still being completed, in particular to record names in oral tradition used by Aboriginal peoples.

Since 1990, some large areas in the Northwest Territories, and lesser areas in Yukon Territory, Quebec, Newfoundland, and Alberta have been systematically surveyed for names. These jurisdictions, plus Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia, have in some areas undertaken field collection on a rather less comprehensive basis, or are aware of independent studies that have addressed field recording of toponyms.

In some areas, but a few names have been added to the official records; in others, several thousand names may have been recorded, but have not necessarily yet been through the necessary administrative steps to designate them as official toponyms.

To record this information on field work, the CPCGN has been maintaining base maps of Canada, on which are compiled 1:50 000 scale map sheet areas where field work has been undertaken. This has evolved into a data base, from which can be plotted field work undertaken in particular decades (or more recently in individual years). Some parts of Canada still have a low density of locally recorded names, but considerable progress has been made in the 1990s to record and document names in oral tradition in the north, before many are lost with the passing of today's elders.

3.2 Automation of toponymic data bases and data availability

This aspect of CPCGN standardization activities has increased in importance over the past five years. The CPCGN Advisory Committee on Canadian Digital Toponymic Services followed up its Vision and associated recommendations to the CPCGN by providing a forum for members to discuss the development of toponymic data bases, the exchange of digital toponymic data between different levels of government, and links to other types of geo-referenced data bases.

The Canadian Geographical Names Data Base (CGNDB) is managed nationally at Natural Resources Canada, and contains some 500 000 records from across the country, with attribute information about location, status, type of feature, date of official recognition, name origin, etc. The CGNDB is managed with ORACLE software (Version 7), running on a SPARC 10, with a SOLARIS 2.4 operating system. The character set ISO 8859 allows the inclusion of diacritics needed in Canadian names, except for some characters used in Athapaskan languages. At present, numerical substitutions are used to represent these characters.

Today, name decisions are made at the level of individual jurisdictions of the CPCGN, so most provinces and territories have some sort of data base storing their names records in a digital format. Some of these originated from downloaded files from the CGNDB (e.g. Northwest Territories, British Columbia) while others grew from the provincial paper copy names records (e.g. Quebec, Alberta). During the 1990s, agreements were signed with provinces and territories to ensure the continued free exchange of toponymic data, including the "core" fields of information associated with each approved record.
Core data fields are as follows:

- Geographical name - spelled as authorized
- Province / territory in which the feature lies
- Status - at a minimum, whether or currently approved / official
- Cross-reference to formerly approved name, if name is being changed
- Date on which name was approved (or ceased to be approved for current use)
- Type of feature / place
- Latitude and longitude - including degrees, minutes, and seconds in new records; also coordinates for headwaters of flowing features
- National Topographic System (NTS) 1:50 000 map reference
- At least one element of administrative or geographic locational data
- Brief narrative of location
- Graphic representation to show applicable limits of feature

Also highly desirable are:

- Second level of administrative unit within the province or territory (where applicable)
- Unofficial variant names
- Summary of origin or historical data

Other fields of data are kept at the provincial/territorial level (e.g. details on field collection and on administrative steps relevant to the approval of a name); and other fields are added nationally (e.g. code for features in a national park, flags for features crossing territorial/provincial/international borders). Every record on the CGNDB is identified by a five letter unique key. These may, or may not, be included at the provincial/territorial level data bases.

Toponymic data is today transferred in a variety of ways, ranging from the traditional paper copy method to ftp data capture over the Internet.

Since the mid-1990s, names in a separate data base, maintained by the Canadian Hydrographic Service for the CPCGN, have also been amalgamated into the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base.

So that CPCGN members could have on-line read-only access to the records of the CGNDB, accounts were set up to enable telnet sessions from remote locations to the central data base. Members' access permitted a more comprehensive view of the data than is provided to the general public.

Several initiatives to upgrade data have been undertaken over the last five years. Nationwide, a continuing programme to correct errors in records is in hand. The coordinates are upgraded to degrees, minutes and seconds, wherever possible, but only in Manitoba has a project been completed to upgrade all records in this way. During the past three years, a major project has been undertaken to add all pertinent NTS 1:50 000 map sheet numbers to records, to improve on the record of a single map sheet, as previously stored.

A project with Statistics Canada has been completed to match the place names in 1991 Census data with the official spellings stored on the CGNDB. This will allow Statistics Canada access to name changes, and means that population data (at least for incorporated places) could be accessed for name records on the CGNDB. These links will promote the use of official names.

Accuracy of data and maintenance of standardized name records remains an essential function of the CPCGN, particularly as the use of official toponyms and their digital distribution increases annually.

3.3 Development of policies and standards

Since the publication of the revised edition of *Principles and procedures for geographical naming* in 1990, only a few changes have been made to the concepts included.

- In Principle 7, the text on discriminatory or derogatory names has been restated.
- In Appendix 4, the two-letter code for Quebec has been updated from PQ to QC

The glossary of *Generic terms in Canada's geographical names* was originally published in 1987. No new edition has been published, but a reference list of generic terms in use continues to be maintained, and approximately 30 further terms have been identified and described in their use in current official toponyms.

The role of the CPCGN's Advisory Committee on Names for Undersea and Maritime Features has started to expand as recent technology allows improved identification of details of the sea floor. The information pamphlet on the role of this Committee is currently being reviewed.

The federal Translation Bureau continues to address questions associated with the use of geographical names in English- and French-language texts. There continue to be a number of places and features that have official names in both English and French, including pan-Canadian feature names, some undersea features names, names of national parks, etc. (The complete listing is available from the CPCGN Secretariat.)

In Manitoba, equivalent names have been approved in French for a number of water courses, crossing designated French Language Service Areas in the southern part of the province. These names are for use on maps and in texts. In Ontario, alternate names

(exact status/use yet to be determined) have been approved and unofficial French text equivalents have been established for all Ontario's official geographical names. In the Yukon, some alternate names (exact status/use yet to be determined) have been approved in Aboriginal languages for geographical features already having official names, mainly in English.

CPCGN awareness of Aboriginal names and naming continues. Extensive recording of names in oral tradition is taking place, particularly in northern parts of Canada. Writing of names in these languages is following standard orthographies, wherever they exist. In Athapaskan languages, where the modified, extended Roman alphabet is used, such characters may be included in geographical names. A registry is maintained for these characters (currently 25 are in use) needed on the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base; at present numerical substitutions are used until international standards are available and in general use. Some official names from Aboriginal languages include generic terms in these languages, rather than generics in English or in French. Questions of pronunciation guides for mapping and other uses require further discussion, although educational materials complete with sound, providing the pronounciation of such geographical names, have been prepared in the Yukon.

As yet, although some geographical names have been recorded in syllabics (e.g. Inuktitut syllabics), these forms have not been accorded any official status.

3.4 Development of appropriate methodology, tools and training

Among the most important tools developed during the past five years are two publications addressing issues of Aboriginal naming:

(a) a field manual: *Guide to the field collection of Native geographical names / Guide pour la collecte sur le terrain de toponymes autochtones* (1992)
(b) an annotated bibliography: *Native Canadian geographical names: an annotated bibliography / La toponymie autochtone du Canada : une bibliographie annotée* (1993 and 1995 and now in the production of the third edition)

In 1992/93, the CPCGN produced an 11-minute video (with the same images, but separate soundtracks in English and French) to explain to the general public, the technical and cultural aspects of gegraphical naming in Canada. In 1996/97 this video, *What's in a toponym? The story of Canada's geographical names / La toponymie : mémoire des lieux*, was re-issued and will be distributed to schools across Canada during the CPCGN Centennial celebrations.

In Quebec, the Commission de toponymie published *La toponymie autochtone Québec, bilan et prospective* (1996); this included an annex "Politique relative auxs noms autochtones". The translation of this document into English was arranged by the Secretariat of the CPCGN and is available as *Native toponymy in Québec ... past, present and future.*

3.5 Dissemination of accurate toponymic information

Canadian geographical names are disseminated in a variety of ways: for example, through publications (including maps); through exhibits; through the World Wide Web; and through digital toponymic files.

3.5.1 Publications

At the national level, the following have been completed:

- *Gazetteer of Canada Series*: revised hard copy volumes and microfiche for Nova Scotia (1993), Manitoba (1994), and New Brunswick (1995). The first edition of the *Concise Gazetteer of Canada* was published in 1997.

- *Canoma* - two issues per year with articles and notes, including material on policy development in Canadian toponymy; the newsletter was started in 1975 and now has an index updated annually.

- Information papers
  - 100 years of geographical naming in Canada (1997)
  - Features having names in both official languages and policies determining their use on maps and in texts (updated annually)

Since 1992, the offices of the provincial, territorial and federal members of the CPCGN have published various toponymic materials, including:

- Québec: *Noms et lieux du Québec - Dictionnaire illustré* (1994, 1996). Material also now available on CD-ROM.
- Alberta: *Place Names of Alberta,* in four volumes (1991, 1992, 1994, 1996)
- Québec: *Supplément cumulatif* to the 1987 Répertoire toponymique du Québec (1993 and 1997).
- Northwest Territories: *NWT Geographic Names - Program Manual* (1993)
- Yukon publications on historical/cultural aspects of Yukon geographical names
- Programme information brochures continue to be available from BC, Yukon, Manitoba, and Quebec; and newsletters from BC, Alberta, and Quebec
- Parks Canada re-issued its bilingual list of national parks and national historic sites, in *Terminology used by Parks Canada / Terminologie en usage à Parcs Canada* (1997)
- The pamphlet *Naming Canada's geographical features / La dénomination des entités géographiques du Canada* continues to be made available to members of the public making names submissions

3.5.2 Exhibits and the media

Dissemination of standardized geographical names to the public has been promoted through two exhibits developed in conjunction with 100 years of official naming in Canada in 1997:

- CPCGN: *Every name tells a story: 100 years of official place naming in Canada / À chaque nom son histoire : 100 ans d'apellations officielles de noms de lieux au Canada.* Much of the exhibit material is also now available on the World Wide Web.
- Alberta: *From Abasand to Zoldovara - place names, a part of our heritage*

Toponymic information has been disseminated through the media - particularly through radio and TV programmes; the press; presentations to school interest groups; open house days; office visits; conference papers, etc.

3.5.3 Internet and digital files

A major step forward in disseminating geographical names information worldwide has resulted from the technology of the WWW. A far larger audience across the world can

now access Canadian geographical names. The federal geographical names website provides entry into the CGNDB and provides general administrative information about standardization of geographical names. From this Natural Resources Canada's website, users can link to the geographical names data base of British Columbia and find information about programmes in the Northwest Territories, Alberta and Quebec.

A major initiative to make toponymic material available for eductional purposes has been started through SchoolNet. Articles, games, teachers' kits have been included so far; so too, have some modules created by students on toponymy of different regions of Canada.

Geographical names digital data files from the CGNDB (and from a few provincial and territorial data bases) can now be purchased by those wishing to use standard geographical names data in their own data bases or in value-added products. In addition, links are being made from other geo-referenced data bases to the geographical names on the WWW; this brings the advantage of accessing a site where the data are updated daily.

3.6 Outreach and liaison with the international community

Over the past five years Canadian geographical names publications, information and advice have been provided to names authorities and other offices around the world.

The goals of UN standardization have been promoted in varous ways:

- Canada has participated in the work of the United States/Canada and Romano-Hellenic divisions
- Canadians have participated regularly in meetings of UNGEGN
- Helen Kerfoot has worked as Vice-Chair of UNGEGN since 1991
- Assistance has been provided for training, including courses in South Africa, New Zealand and Latvia, and for working meetings in Australia and Korea.
- The CPCGN continues to have links with academia through the Canadian Society for the Study of Names, the American Names Society, and ICOS.
- The use of official names is promoted, within the government and with private sector publishers, e.g. Canadian Geographic, National Geographic, Reader's Digest
- A United Nations geographical names standardization module was introduced on the GeoNames WWW site

4. Use of official names

Names as officially approved by the CPCGN are used on federal maps, for example, on Natural Resources Canada products - National Topographic System (NTS) maps, 1:2M and smaller scale maps; and on Canadian Hydrographic Service and National Defence chart and map products. Efforts continue to be made to increase the awareness in federal departments of official names sources and services, and to supply accurate names information to map producers. The CPCGN continues to produce paper copy gazetteer volumes. Reprinting the *Concise Gazetteer of Canada* about every five years is foreseen. However, the viability of paper copy products of this sort will need constant review.

In the digital world, it will be crucial to meet the challenge of maintaining up-to-date records, so that authorized toponymic data bases become indispensible tools and focal points for other geo-referenced data sets. For example in Canada, linking to the National Topographic Data Base and to other environmental, regulatory and inventory data bases, will promote the use of official names, both within government and in the private sector.